THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (e) Restriction on import of 488 items were removed during 1996-97. Similarly restrictions were removed on 391 more items during 1998 and on 894 items during 1999.

The comparative data relating to imports during the year 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96, *i.e.* prior to the removal of the quantitative restrictions, and that relating to 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 *i.e.* after the removal of quantitative restrictions is given in the statement below:—

(Value in Rs. Crores)

Year	Exports Incl. re-exports	Imports	Trade Balance	Rate of growth of Exports	Rate of growth of Imports %
1993-94	69751	73101	-3350	39.9	15.3
1994-95	82674	89971	-7297	18.5	23.1
1995-96	106353	122678	-16325	28.6	36.4
1996-97	118817	138920	-20103	11.7	13.2
1997-98	130101	154176	-24075	9.5	11.0
1998-99(P)	141604	176099	-34495	8.8	14.2

It will be seen from this data that the freeing of imports during this period has not had any significant impact on the average rate of growth of imports. However, imports and exports are regularly monitored and corrective action is taken wherever necessary through suitable modifications in the customs duties.

Plight of HSCL

*142. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA PILLAI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had received a memorandum signed by 57 Members of Parliament about the plight of Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCL);

(b) if so, what are the salient points by the MPs therein; and

(c) what steps Government have taken on each point raised in the memorandum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Memorandum dated nil signed by 57 MPs was received and acknowledged on 16th July, 1998 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The main points raised are as below:

Major jobs in steel plants are being off loaded to private builders despite HSCL's main activities connected to steel plants from early stages .The price preference of 10% allowed by Government has not been adhered to. In some cases, HSCL has been L-I, but the jobs have been given to private builders. In addition, HSCL's claims have also been withheld/disputed. Thus there is shortage of working capital with HSCL.

The request is to advise/intruct the concerned Ministries to settle the issues listed above.

(c) HSCL was established in 1964 primarily to undertake construction of Modern Integrated Steel Plants. It remained a subsidiary of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) between 1973 and 1978. It again became an independent company in 1978. The Company had undertaken almost all Civil, Mechanical, Structural Erection Works in the Bokaro Steel Plant of SAIL. Similar works were undertaken by HSCL during the 4 MT modernisation of Bhilai Steel Plant. In addition various job orders like Raw Material H andling Complex, Blast Furnace and New Sintering Plant were awarded to HSCL in the modernisation of Durgapur Steel Plant. HSCL has been in the process of obtaining job orders, and of late, has diversified its activities in the non-steel sector like housing, power, roads and bridges and oil. Through HSCL remaiend L-I in a number of bids and inspite of the purchase preference of 10% permitted by the Government, it has not been able to get the requisite assistance from various central PSUs/Central Government Departments. This may have been because of its limited experience in some of the fields and also due to its accumulated losses incurred over the years and reflected in the balance sheet. HSCL has been getting its claims settled with various agencies. Also, SAIL and HSCL have resolved to settle their outstanding claims and dues through a process of mutual conciliation.

Ministry of Steel has taken up with Central Government Ministries/ Agencies in addition to various State Government' Departments/ Agencies with requests to award the jobs in their projects to HSCL. Government has sanctioned a Revival Package for HSCL in July, 1999. It is expected that with the scuccessful

implementation of the Revival Package, the performance of HSCL will improve.

Renovation of Bhubaneshwar City

*143. DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special attention is being paid for renovation of the capital city of Bhubaneswar in Orissa after it was devastated by the recent super cyclone; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b). The Government of India has sanctioned the following amounts to Orissa for the Cyclone:

National Fund for Calamity Relief	:	Rs. 500 Crores (ad-hoc)
Advance Plan Assistance	:	Rs. 450 crores
Calamity Relief Fund (Central share)	:	Rs. 42.50 crores

The total assistance sanctioned by Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) for Orissa (including Bhubaneswar) under housing is Rs. 1116.40 crores. Of this Rs. 1112.50 crores is loan assistance and Rs. 3.90 crores is grant assistance. HUDCO has also sanctioned Rs. 5.00 lakhs.(grant) for Avenue Plantation from Airport to AF Square in the city.

The Central Public Works Departments (CPWD) in Orissa have completed works worth Rs. 80 lakhs, of which rs. 62 lakhs have been carried out at Bhubaneswar and the remaining work shall be completed by April, 2000.

The Building Material Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) in Orissa is conducting a rapid damage assessement study and has also spent Rs. 10 lakhs on machines.

The State government expenditure on repair and renovation works taken up in the capital city of Bhubaneswar amounts to Rs. 181.62 lakhs.